InternetNZ supports Minister in declining Separation Plan

In February, Minister of Communications David Cunliffe declined Telecom's amended Operational Separation plan, a decision supported by InternetNZ.

Cunliffe instead set out further amendments he will require to the draft plan before he accepts it. The Society raised a number of issues in its operational separation submission on 25 January 2008, particularly seeking remedial action in respect to the Amended Determination, which allowed significant group incentives for the Telecom Wholesale Manager.

Executive Director Keith Davidson says it is very good to see Government has recognised the issues, and is committed to ensuring a robust operational separation plan that correctly incents the relevant divisions within Telecom. "Ideally the wholesale manager should have little or no group incentive and InternetNZ is pleased to see that a limit will be put in place."

Other issues InternetNZ addressed include lack of industry consultation on the Next Generation Network, interconnection, and disclosure of Telecom's fibre plans.

"Telecom is in trials of fibre services and is involved in fibre to new subdivisions. Its plans and commercial policies around future access services should be disclosed," says Davidson.

Another issue raised by InternetNZ was the inadequate "Chinese walls" around planning of new services and policy making, and insufficient checks on the involvement of the CEO in the day-to-day business of the independent divisions.

InternetNZ looks forward to seeing a final plan that can work and encourages Telecom to speed its process so that the March 31st date can be met for Operational Separation.

Making contact

Keith Davidson
Executive Director
keith@internetnz.net.nz

Jordan Carter
Deputy Executive Director
jordan@internetnz.net.nz

Richard Wood
Senior Comms and Research Officer
richard@internetnz.net.nz

Campbell Gardiner
Comms and Research Officer
campbell@internetnz.net.nz

Susi Fookes
Project Administrator
susi@internetnz.net.nz

Office
L9, 5-7 Willeston St, Wellington
office@internetnz.net.nz
(04) 472 1600
www.internetnz.net.nz

APTLD marks 10 years

Representatives from over 20 Asia Pacific Country Code Top Level Domains gathered in Taipei, Taiwan in late February for a meeting of APTLD (the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association).

An APTLD board meeting and AGM was held concurrently in Taipei, with InternetNZ Executive Director Keith Davidson elected APTLD's Vice-Chair. It also celebrated ten years of service to the Asia Pacific domain name community.

Among the issues discussed in Taipei were cyber security, IPv6 and IDNs (Internationalised Domain Names), with Asia Pacific ccTLDs encouraged to share information on IDN testing.

Domain Name Commissioner Debbie Monahan, NZRS staffer Dave Baker and Executive Director Keith Davidson represented .nz. InternetNZ staffer Susi Fookes attended as APTLD Secretariat.

Cunliffe and Reynolds address Broadband Forum

Hon David Cunliffe

The Local Government Broadband Forum was held in February, with keynote speeches given by Minister of Communications David Cunliffe and Telecom CEO Paul Reynolds.

Cunliffe re-iterated the economic and sustainability importance of broadband, saying New Zealand requires fast urban fibre cores, fibre to the node and fast broadband to the home.

"We also need to radically upgrade rural broadband infrastructure, which will most likely be a mixture of satellite and wireless as well as traditional copper," he says.

"The message we're hearing from all sectors is that New Zealand needs faster and cheaper broadband and we need it now. The Government has intervened in the telecommunications sector through regulatory reforms, but there are still gaps."

Cunliffe told the 200-strong audience that local government has a critical role to play in broadband infrastructure deployment, especially in matching consenting processes to broadband strategy.

"Cabinet will shortly consider four proposed National Environment Standards for telecommunications facilities which will establish national standards and provide certainty across the country for permitted activity within the Resource Management Act," he says.

"The Standards will relate to the installation of cabinets in road reserve, subject cabinets located in road reserve to specified noise limits, specify limitations on height and size for the installation of masts and antennas on existing structures in road reserve, and standards for activities that emit radio-frequency fields, such as mobile phone transmitters."

In addition, later this year the Government will introduce the Utilities Access Amendment Bill, which Cunliffe says will provide network operators with certainty in their engagement with multiple local authorities as well as providing greater clarity when seeking access to motorways or rail corridors for infrastructure building.

The Government is also putting together a broadband resource kit for Councils. The kit will provide best practice guidance for promoting broadband investment.

Dr Paul Reynolds

Addressing the mainly local government audience, Telecom Chief Executive Paul Reynolds outlined Telecom's four-year cabinetisation and broadband work programme. Much of the cabinetisation work involves the Resource Management Act, with resource consents needed for half of the 3600 cabinets that Telecom is planning to install.

Reynolds says Telecom's relationship with local government needs to be improved, he committed to increasing the flow of information to councils and territorial local authorities.

"The creation and use of digital infrastructure by Councils is as important as other, more traditional forms of utility infrastructure. It is crucial that we work with Councils to best and most efficiently secure the progress of what is one of New Zealand's biggest infrastructure projects," he says.

Rural Broadband Working Group

A working group comprising representatives from InternetNZ, Local Government New Zealand, the Economic Development Association of New Zealand, Federated Farmers and TUANZ has been formed to progress a range of issues relating to rural broadband.

The working group aims to progress a Rural Broadband Strategy Framework and act as a conduit between local government and rural stakeholders and the Government in the ongoing development of rural broadband strategy and policy.

A discussion document relating to the Framework was presented at the Local Government Broadband Forum in February. More information is available on the InternetNZ website at: http://www.internetnz.net.nz/issues/current-issues/ruralbbband

Councils discuss Open Access

Open Access was a key discussion point at the Local Government Broadband Forum, with a range of industry speakers asked to talk on the topic.

Some highlights:

Steve Fuller, Chief Executive of Christchurch City Network (CNNL), outlined the Garden City's approach to its new local fibre network.

Fuller described a key feature of Open Access as having a mandatory requirement for access by others, as compared to shared access being voluntary. "The powerful component of Open Access is the freedom of use to the network service layer or passive layer."

CCNL provides dark fibre at a flat rate regardless of distance, which people can use how they want at whatever speed they want. "The pure lack of open unrestricted bandwidth is the problem. By creating an open access environment network you lower the barrier," says Fuller.

So far CCNL has laid 40km of fibre, has five ISPs offering services across the network and 300 connections.

Fuller compared open communications infrastructure to roading, describing it as a key piece of infrastructure that should be owned by the community.

FX Networks Managing Director Murray Jurgeleit revealed the extent of the longhaul provider's network, particularly around the North Island. The company has been busy laying fibre and engaging in partnerships with a range of government and commercial organisations including Telecom, he said.

"We are a small country – resources are scarce. Collaboration will get us all a better bang for buck."

Jurgeleit says local government should participate in building open access networks at the infrastructure layer, either through providing ducting or cables.

Like many at the event, Jurgeleit is looking for consistency in approach across local government, as a key enabler. "We get good support as we lay our network but in some centres there are different rules that are unduly restrictive."

Steve Fuller

Citylink CEO Neil de Wit raised the issue of regulated access to ducting. He highlighted the extent of Pipe Networks fibre rollout in Australia, where access to ducting is mandatory under competition law. "Fibre is cheap. What is expensive is the hole in the ground," says de Wit.

Mark Ratcliffe, Chief Executive of Telecom's Chorus division outlined its position of providing "equivalent access" to the access network as required by the impending operational separation, and indicated a willingness to use other people's networks and share fibre backhaul to its cabinets.

Chorus has 25,000km of fibre and in installing 3500 cabinets over coming years will need to extend its own fibre or utilise others.

Roger Matthews of North Shore City Council, John Bone of TelstraClear and Donald Clark of REANNZ also presented.

Foo Camp 2008

The second annual New Zealand Foo Camp was held at Mahurangi College, Warkworth, in early February.

Foo Camp is an invitation-only gathering of over 100 New Zealand technologists. Attendees gather to network, share ideas and discuss a range of new and emerging technologies, including web applications, open source programming and wireless and web services.

There were a variety of sessions this year, ranging from coding, hardware hacking, and a discussion on intellectual property led by Auckland-based lawyer Rick Shera. InternetNZ President Peter Macaulay was invited to attend, as were Councillors Jonny Martin, Michael Wallmannsberger and ex-InternetNZ President Colin Jackson.

A Radio New Zealand interview with Foo Camp organiser Nathan Torkington is available at the following link:

http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/saturday/20080202

from the DNC

Structural Review Changes – Domain Name Commission Limited

InternetNZ has been undertaking a structural review. As part of that review, the Domain Name Commission will cease being an operational office of InternetNZ and will instead be incorporated as a company, fully owned by InternetNZ. Domain Name Commission Limited will begin operations on 1 April 2008.

It is intended that the existing registrar authorisation agreements with Internet NZ will be replaced with new agreements with Domain Name Commission Limited. However, the new agreements will be on the same terms as the existing agreements with InternetNZ. Registrars will be contacted shortly by the DNC with more information on the change.

All .nz policies and procedures will remain operational. There will be minor changes to the .nz policies and procedures to reflect the correct entity going forward. Otherwise, the substance of such policies and procedures will remain the same.

.nz Dispute Resolution Service - Policy Review

On 1 June 2006, the .nz Dispute Resolution Service (DRS - www.dnc.org.nz/drs) came into effect. The intention in establishing the DRS was to provide parties with a low cost alternative to the Courts to resolve .nz domain name disputes.

At the time the DRS was implemented, it was agreed that there would be a review sometime after its first year of operation. This consultation has now closed, however three submissions were received and are available at www.dnc.org.nz\drs-consult